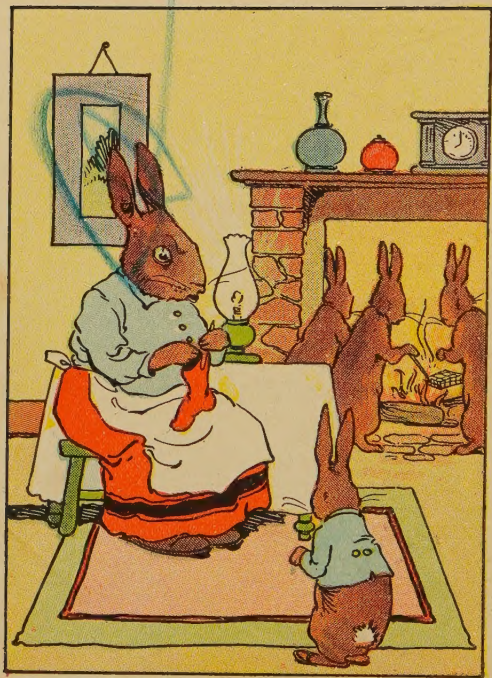


# PETER RABBIT AND THE LITTLE BOY









*Frontispiece*

ALTEMUS'  
PETER RABBIT SERIES

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Peter Rabbit  
and the  
Little Boy

BY  
LINDA STEVENS ALMOND

With Illustrations

BY  
J. L. G.

PHILADELPHIA  
HENRY ALTEMUS COMPANY



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# Peter Rabbit

and the

## Little Boy

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ALL good little girls and boys know that Peter Rabbit lived with his mother and his little sisters, Flopsy, Mopsy and Cotton-tail, in a sand-bank under the roots of a big fir-tree at the edge of a wood.

Their house was just as cosy as could be, and on bitter cold nights, when Old Mr. North Wind whistled outside, Flopsy and Mopsy and Cotton-tail would pop corn over the

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crackling log-fire, and Mother Rabbit would darn the family's stockings and tell Once-upon-a-Time stories. There wasn't a happier family anywhere.

*starts  
reverses* In summertime, they often played on a lovely sand-pile and waded in the brook, and sometimes Peter pulled his little sisters up and down the lane in his express-wagon. But Peter, you know, was brim-full of mischief: one day he pretended to be a runaway pony and upset the express-wagon, and the three little girl-rabbits were thrown in three different directions.





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Rabbit put on her sunbonnet, and after she had kissed each one, she started off with her pail to get water from the spring.

Now, Flopsy and Mopsy and Cotton-tail would not have disobeyed their mother for anything, but Peter hadn't promised not to go over the hill, so, as soon as Mrs. Rabbit was out of sight, he started to go over the hill to fly his kite. His sisters begged him not to go, but he just shouted over his shoulder: "Oh, I won't go far and I won't stay long!"

His sisters watched him till all they could see was the end of his

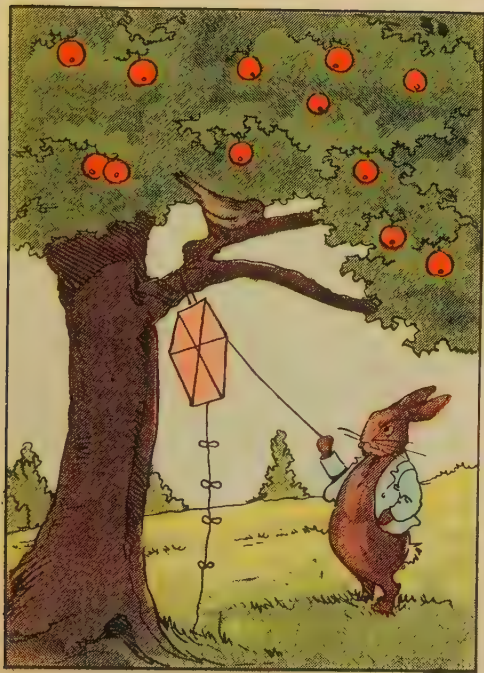


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little white tail. Then they sadly rolled their hoops and waited for their mother, to tell her of Peter's disobedience. For it *was* disobedience, even if he had not promised not to go over the hill.

Peter had not gone far before his kite caught in an apple tree, and no amount of pulling would bring it down. He stuck his hands in his pockets and wondered what to do. Then he heard a voice from up in the tree and saw a sparrow there.

"Maybe the wind will blow it out by the time you come this way again," said the sparrow.



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“Why, that’s true,” Peter agreed. Then he thought that he might as well let his kite take care of itself while he looked about for some other means of entertainment.

So off he went, lippity-lip, lippity-lip, as happy as you please. The blue-bells nodded to him along the roadside, the honeysuckle was abloom, the fields were full of butter-cups, and Peter thought what a fine thing it was to get out in the big world. It seemed silly of his sisters to expect him to stay home and play with them all the time.

All of a sudden, his little eyes





2—Little Boy

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began to dance and twinkle, for just ahead, jumping backwards and forwards over a stump, was his chum Jack-the-Jumper, and Jack-the-Jumper was the liveliest young rabbit that he knew. Peter put his hands to his mouth and made a funnel, and called:

“Hi! Jack-the-Jumper!”

Jack-the-Jumper stopped jumping and looked quickly around, and, when he saw Peter, he was so happy that he hardly knew what to do. At once, he said:

“Where shall we go today, Peter?”

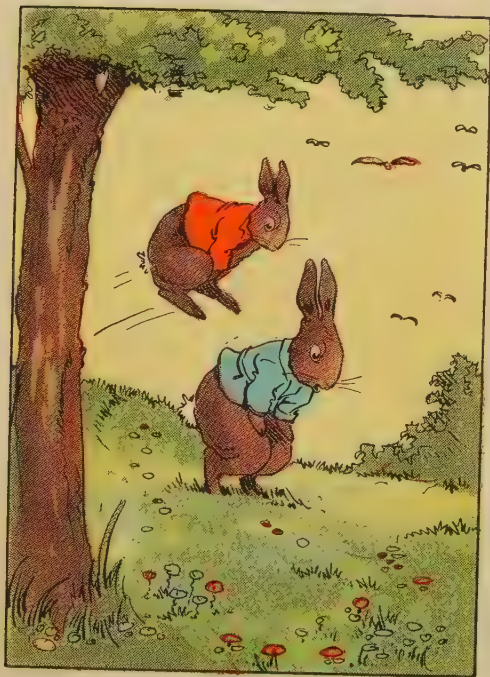
Now, Peter’s mother had told



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him often that he must never, never go into the wood, for it was full of strange dangers; but he was a naughty little rabbit and wanted to go there just because he had been told not to do so. So he whispered: "Let's go to the wood."

So off they started, laughing and shouting, dodging behind trees and playing tag and Indians. They had the most fun at leap-frog. Peter would squat like a little frog, and Jack-the-Jumper would hop over him. Then Jack-the-Jumper would squat, and Peter would hop over *him*.



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Presently they met a funny little old man, pushing a funny little old cart, with a funny little old bell on it that went “ting-a-ling, ting-a-ling!” When the funny little old man saw Peter and Jack-the-Jumper, he stopped and laughed and laughed until he shook all over, and when he couldn’t laugh any more, he asked them to excuse him, please, because he wasn’t used to meeting little rabbits on his travels.

Of course, Peter and Jack-the-Jumper wanted to know all about him and his travels, so he told them that he was the Scissors Man





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and all they could hear was his laughter and his funny little old bell going “ting-a-ling, ting-a-ling.”

“I wonder what he would have done to us,” said Jack.

“I believe he’d have cut our legs off,” said Peter, for he knew very well how disobedient he’d been.

Just then they heard somebody chattering “Cha-ak! Cha-ak!” at the very top of his voice on the branch of a tree.

“Who is that noisy bird?” asked Peter.

“It’s Bobby Blue Jay,” said Jack, “and he seems to be scared.”



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He was, too; for just then there came a SWISH of huge wings, and the two little rabbits, looking up to the sky, saw—what do you suppose? Old Mr. Hawk, ready to pounce right down on them and eat them up.

In the very nick of time, they spied a hole under a tree and slid into it before you could say “Jack Robinson.”

There they sat, trembling and huddled together. They understood now what Bobby Blue Jay had been trying to tell them: he had been trying to warn them of their great danger.

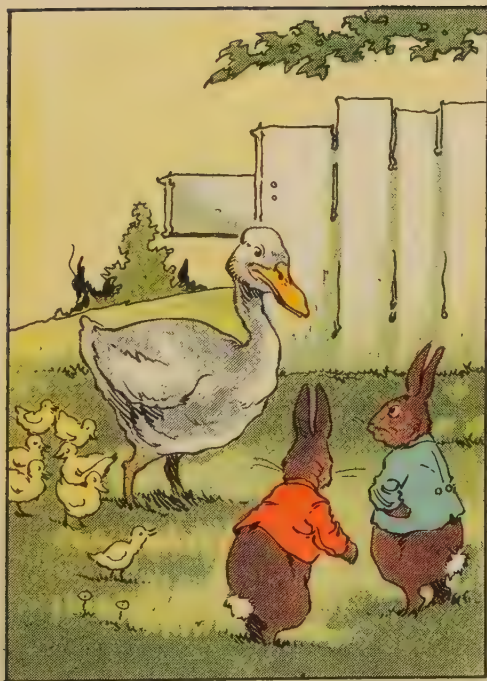


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“If Mr. Hawk had caught us, that would have been the end of us,” said Jack-the-Jumper. “And nobody would ever have known anything about it except little Bobby Blue Jay.”

After a long while, they peeped out. Mr. Hawk had got tired and flown away, so Peter and Jack-the-Jumper scampered out of the wood and came to Mr. McGregor’s wheat field. They went through the wheat field to the barnyard and stopped for a chat with Mrs. Goosie Gray, who was strolling about with her ten little goslings.





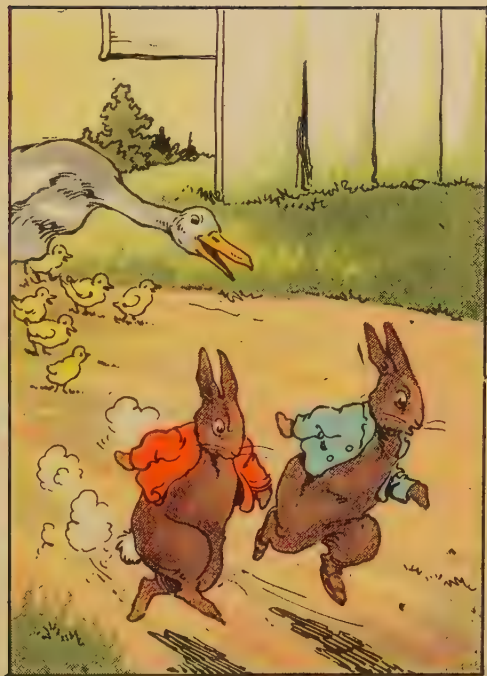
3—*Little Boy*

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“Mrs. Goosie Gray,” Peter impolitely asked, “why have you such a long neck?”

Mrs. Goosie Gray became very angry at that. “I have a long neck so as to do this!” she cried, and she stuck out her neck and uttered such a terrifying “His-s-s” that Peter and Jack-the-Jumper scampered away as fast as they could go.

At last they came to Mr. McGregor’s cabbage-patch. Now, you know, bunnies simply can’t resist cabbages and so, as these little bunnies were very hungry, they began to nibble at the nice green



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leaves, although they knew quite well that the cabbages didn't belong to them, but to Mr. McGregor. They ate and ate and ate until they couldn't eat another bite; then they went up the garden-patch and stopped to rest under a currant-bush.

Soon Peter wondered what time it was, but when he put his hand in his pocket he discovered that his watch was gone. He was quite agitated and set up an awful wail.

“Oh, I've lost my beautiful little watch that Mr. Brown gave me! Whatever shall I do?”

“Crying won't help to find it,”



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said Jack-the-Jumper. "Let's start this minute to look for it."

Just then a Little Boy came skipping down the path, and when he saw a little bunny crying bitterly, he put his hands behind him and said:

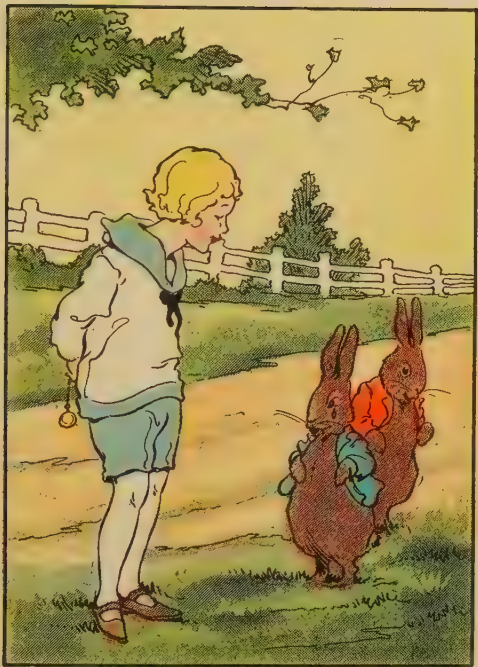
"Who's lost what I've found? It isn't black, nor red, nor brown."

Peter stopped crying. "It's gold!" he cried.

"Yes," nodded the Little Boy, "but what else is it?"

"A watch," said Peter, "and it has P. R. on it for 'Peter Rabbit,' and that's me, and the watch is mine."





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“You don’t say so!” said the Little Boy. “Well, I found it in the cabbage-patch. Were you rabbits in the cabbage-patch?”

Peter and Jack were embarrassed, but had to admit that they had nibbled a few leaves. Then the Little Boy gave back the watch, and Peter was so happy that he jumped up and down and clapped his hands and said he could never thank the Little Boy enough.

The Little Boy asked Peter and Jack-the-Jumper to play with him in his tent in the orchard. There was a velocipede there, and a kiddie-



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car, and a rocking-horse, and an elephant that snorted when you gave it a squeeze, and there were blocks and drums and Indian- and soldier-suits to dress up in. So they put on the soldier-suits, and Peter and Jack carried toy guns, and the Little Boy beat a drum—"Tiddy-bum, tiddy-bum, tiddy-bum, bum, bum"—as they marched round and round. But Peter kept getting out of step, and Jack-the-Jumper couldn't manage to carry his gun like a soldier, so the Little Boy said: "We'll have to play something else."



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Jack-the-Jumper put on roller-skates, but he couldn't skate worth a cent. He no sooner wobbled off than KER-FLOP he went, heels over head, upsetting a basket of red apples.

"I wish you'd learn how to behave in company!" said Peter.

"I know just as well how to behave as you do!" cried Jack.

They had a heated argument, but the Little Boy gave them each a juicy carrot and pretty soon they were friends again.

Then Peter picked up a mouth-organ and was tickled nearly out of



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his wits when he found he could make real music with it. He played and he danced, and then the Little Boy gave him the mouth-organ to take home; and when Peter said that the mouth-organ would please his family, and when he told the Little Boy all about Old Mother Rabbit and Flopsy, Mopsy and Cotton-tail, the Little Boy gave Peter a cunning green umbrella for Mother Rabbit, and a Noah's Ark picture-book for Mopsy, and a fan for Flopsy, and a box of paints for Cotton-tail.

Then Jack-the-Jumper put his





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hands up to his eyes and began to cry.

"What's the matter?" asked the Little Boy. "Soldiers don't cry!"

"Boo-hoo! Boo-hoo!" cried Jack-the-Jumper all the louder. "I'm not a soldier; I'm only a little bunny dressed up in a soldier-suit. And you've given Peter lots of lovely presents and not anything to me!"

"If you're going to be a cry-baby," said Peter, "I'll not go out with you again."

"Well, you cried when you lost your watch," said Jack-the-Jumper.

So the Little Boy gave Jack-the-



4—*Little Boy*

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Jumper the drum to take home with him and a nice, green market-basket for his mother. When Peter saw that it was getting late he said that they must be going, so they took off their soldier suits and the kind Little Boy said:

“Wait. You rabbits can’t carry all those things. How’d you like my Grandfather to take you home in his big automobile?”

“Oh, goody!” cried Peter, and began to blow his mouth-organ.

“Oh, goody!” cried Jack-the-Jumper, and he began to beat his drum with all his might.



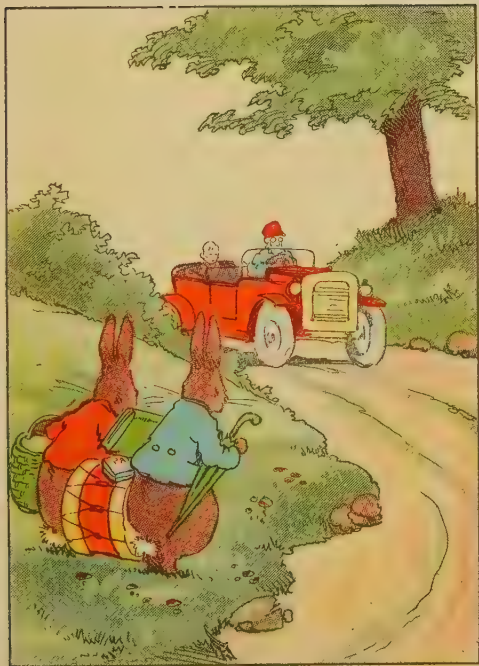
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The Little Boy ran off, and pretty soon they heard a "chuck-chuck" in the road, and a big red automobile came up, and the Little Boy was there and called: "Come on!"

But, oh, my goodness! Who do you suppose was sitting on the front seat of the automobile?

MR. MCGREGOR! GRACIOUS!

Peter and Jack-the-Jumper began to tremble, and their hearts went pit-a-pat, for they remembered the many times they had plundered Mr. McGregor's cabbage-patch, and the many narrow escapes they had had there.

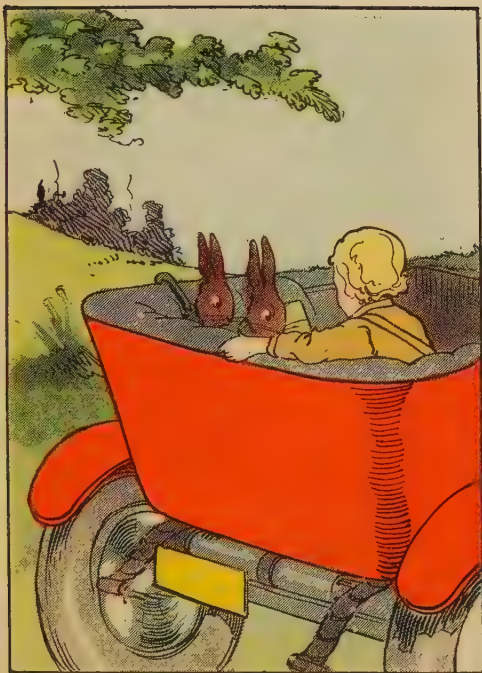


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But Mr. McGregor looked straight ahead and pretended not to see those little rabbits. "Get in!" was all he said. So they took courage and hopped on to the back seat beside the Little Boy, and off they went with a whiz and a whirr, up hill and down dale: it was such fun that Peter and Jack-the-Jumper forgot all about being scared.

Jack-the-Jumper whispered to the Little Boy: "I live at the first Briar Patch." And the Little Boy told his Grandfather (for of course that's who Mr. McGregor was), and they stopped for a second, and Jack-





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the-Jumper jumped out, and said  
“Thank you,” and ran home with  
the market-basket for his mother  
and his drum inside it.

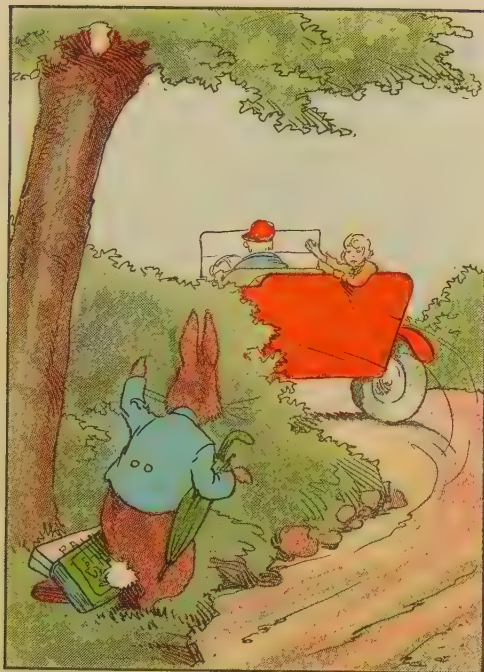
Then they drove on till they came  
near to the fir-tree. Peter thanked  
the Little Boy and whispered way  
down under his breath—for he was  
still afraid of Mr. McGregor:

“Please thank your Grandfather  
for me, Little Boy.”

And then he started scuttling  
toward home.

“Goodbye, Peter Rabbit!” shouted  
the Little Boy.

And Mr. McGregor shouted:



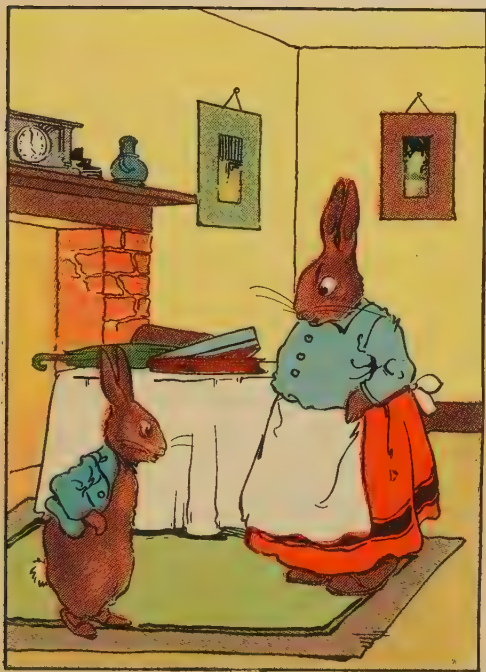
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“Come again, Peter Rabbit, to see the Little Boy, but *keep out of my cabbage-patch!*”

Peter chuckled as he ran into the house, but Old Mother Rabbit was waiting for him, cross as two sticks.

“Go to bed, you naughty rabbit!” she said. “Not a bite of supper for you this night!”

She wouldn’t let Peter say a word. No, indeedy! She wouldn’t even give him a candle. No, indeedy! The only light in Peter’s room was the kind rays that Old Mr. Moon Man sent through the tiny window into his tiny room.



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But next morning, Peter brought out all the lovely presents and told his mother and his little sisters what wonderful adventures he and Jack-the-Jumper had had, and how none other than Mr. McGregor had brought them home in a big red automobile. Then Old Mother Rabbit admitted that perhaps she had been a little severe with Peter.

“Just the same,” said Old Mother Rabbit, putting on her glasses and frowning at the other little bunnies, “Peter Rabbit ran into very great danger and escaped only because he was brought up to be quick on his



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feet and quick with his wits. I hope he has indeed learned at last that even little bunnies are happier when they obey their mothers, and I hope he understands that mothers are thinking of such things as Mr. Hawk and the Scissors Man when they warn their children not to wander far from home.

**Publisher's Note.**—The further adventures of Peter Rabbit are told in "Peter Rabbit and Little White Rabbit."











THIS BOOK Belongs  
to Randall S





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